(ii) To open new soil testing laboratories in uncovered areas.

(iii) To impart training to technical staff of soil testing laboratories.

(iv) To organise field demonstrations based on soil analysis and farmers' training on conjunctive use of organic, bio and chemical fertilisers.

(v) To prepare soil fertility maps.

The scheme is yet to be approved by the Government.

[English]

Scavenger Rehabilitation Scheme

2542. SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL :
SHRI DINSHA PATEL :
DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY :

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the large scale misappropriation of funds under the Scavengers Rehabilitation Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in the matter;

(d) if so, the action taken against the guilty persons; and

(e) the steps proposed by the Government to avoid misappropriation of funds under the scheme in future?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Tabie of the House.

Shrimp Farms

2543. SHRI SATYAJITSINH DULIPSINH GAEKWAD :
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of workers employed in over 2000 shrimp-farms are likely to be thrown out of employment with the closure of these farms as per Supreme Court's orders besides its adverse impact on the food-production and exports;

(b) if so, the number of shrimp farm workers likely to be affected; and

(c) the steps being taken to provide them with the alternative employment and to rehabilitate their families?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c) A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking review of the judgement of the Supreme Court. The matter is sub judice.

Cutting of Timber

2544. SHRI VIJAY PATEL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether large scale padauk timbers is being allowed to cut from the forest land near Bindraban, South Andaman Islands;

(b) if so, whether the Central Government propose to issue any directives to the State Government to inquire into the matter and initiate necessary action against the persons responsible for the same; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

International Pepper Exchange

2545. SHRI S. AJAY KUMAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to set up an International Pepper Exchange at Cochin; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including salient features of the Exchange?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been decided to set up an International Pepper Futures Exchange at Kochi, Kerala with a second trading floor in Kualalumpur, Malaysia. The India Pepper and Spice Trade Association (IPSTA), Kochi which is conducting domestic futures trading has been granted recognition for conducting international futures contracts in black pepper by opening a separate International Commodity Exchange Division. A Clearing House, viz, the First Commodity Clearing Corporation of India, has been incorporated to act as quarantor for the traders and other operators. Guidelines regarding eligibility for foreign participants, mode of participation etc. have been notified. Trading in the international futures contract in pepper is expected to commence shortly.